



DISTORTION SOCIETY

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What She Builds, She Must Destroy

SOLO EXHIBITION BY MICHELLE SILVER

BEACON, NY — This June, Distortion Society presents *What She Builds, She Must Destroy*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Gallery Director Michelle Silver. Through a mix of figurative painting and gestural abstraction, Silver explores the contradictions inherent in motherhood: the tension between creation and destruction, restriction and permission, duty and desire. She questions traditional narratives around child-rearing, societal expectations, and maternal guilt while asking: does a mother have the power, the *right*, to destroy what she builds?

Completed in the past year but marking specific moments from the seven years since her first child was born, Silver's paintings present a pictorial manifesto for coming into maternal power, an ideal version of herself that she has not yet fully surrendered to. Here, we see the archetype of Mother not as a martyr, but as a free-thinking, spirited, fallible beast. She is the owner of her pleasure and her emotional and intellectual promiscuity. She acknowledges the violence of childbirth, the visceral destruction of her body and mind, and harnesses this pain as her power. The Mother gives love, holds discomfort, and heals wounds. She defiantly confronts chaos and asserts herself, even when female rage makes people uncomfortable—"it is not becoming of her," they say. To this, the Mother smiles and unleashes a guttural howl, unfurling the beast inside her.

In *What She Builds, She Must Destroy*, Silver's brushstrokes are an extension of that archetypal Mother's scream. She paints womanhood and motherhood in all its ugliness and glory. Frantic strokes and fiery shades engulf her figures while indiscernible forms collide on the canvas. She builds up her canvases over time, layering paint sometimes to the point of overworking, necessitating a complete act of destruction—smeared paint, violent strokes, and an element of surprise—to bring the work to completion. Silver's paintings do not offer resolution or redemption, instead they insist on being lived in, wrestled with, and metabolized.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Raised in the Catskill Mountains, Michelle Silver (b. 1987) is a painter, curator and graphic designer living and working in the Hudson Valley, NY. Silver graduated magna cum laude from Boston University in 2009 and in 2023, she co-founded with her

tattoo artist husband Distortion Society, where she is currently the Gallery Director.

Silver has exhibited throughout the United States and in London and her work is part of the Fidelity Investments Corporate Art Collection. Her painting and curation have been included in publications including *The New York Times*, *Hyperallergic*, *Times Union*, *Two Coats of Paint*, *Art Business News*, *The Highlands Current*, and *Chronogram*.

EXHIBITION DETAILS

What She Builds, She Must Destroy will be on view at Distortion Society, 155 Main Street, Beacon, NY from June 14, 2025 through August 10, 2025. The gallery is free and open to the public. There will be an opening reception on June 14, 2025 from 7-9pm.

ABOUT DISTORTION SOCIETY

Distortion Society was founded in 2023 by husband-and-wife duo Bradley Silver (a tattoo artist) and Michelle Silver (a painter). Merging contemporary art exhibitions with eclectic styles of tattooing, DS aims to blur the lines between fine art and body art, breaking stigmas associated with each space, questioning the ideas of high brow vs lowbrow art and elevating both the gallery and tattoo experiences through their intersection.

The exhibition space at the front features bimonthly presentations of national and international artist's work; the tattoo studio features accomplished resident and guest tattooers working in a range of unique styles.

TO INQUIRE OR PURCHASE, EMAIL
michelle@distortionsociety.com

FOLLOW THE ARTIST
www.michellesilverart.com
[@michellesilverstudio](https://www.instagram.com/michellesilverstudio)

Checklist on next pages →



The Unraveling, 2025.
Oil on canvas.
62 x 54 inches.
\$5,000.



What She Builds, She Must Destroy, 2024.
Oil on canvas.
40 x 30 inches.
\$3,000.



The Dancer, 2024.
Oil on canvas.
30 x 24 inches.
\$1,800.



Monster Camouflage, 2024.
Oil on canvas.
40 x 30 inches.
\$3,000.



*A Thousand Words
(But Are We Heard?), 2024.*
Oil on canvas.
30 x 24 inches.
\$1,800.



Conservation of Energy, 2025.
Oil on linen.
24 x 20 inches.
\$1,200.



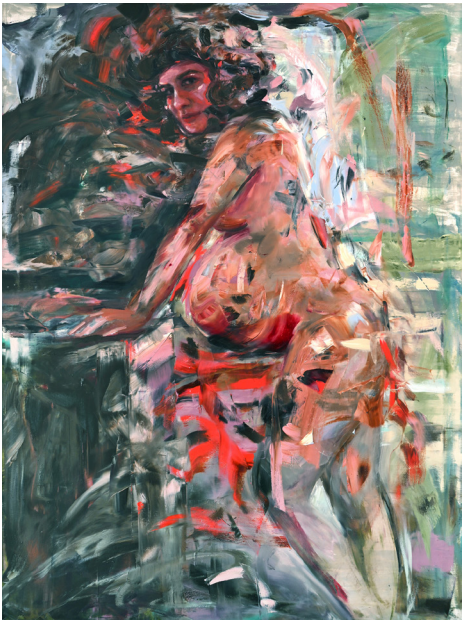
In the Belly of the Beast, 2025.
Oil on linen.
40 x 30 inches.
\$3,000.



Top:
Communication is Hard, 2025.
Oil on linen. 8 x 10 inches.
\$275.



Bottom:
Harness, 2025.
Oil on linen. 8 x 10 inches.
\$275.



Holding Pattern, 2025.
Oil on canvas.
40 x 30 inches.
\$3,000.



Top:
Different Worlds, 2025.
Oil on linen.
8 x 10 inches.
\$275.



Bottom:
Only in Dreams I, 2025.
Oil on linen.
8 x 10 inches.
\$275.



Top:
Forgotten Pearl, 2025.
Oil on linen.
8 x 10 inches.
\$275.



Bottom:
Only in Dreams II, 2025.
Oil on linen.
8 x 10 inches.
\$275.